

WEEKS LANCASTER TRUST  
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**To:** Pamela Monroe, Administrator ([pamela.monroe@sec.nh.gov](mailto:pamela.monroe@sec.nh.gov))  
The New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (SEC)  
Public Utilities Commission, Martin Honigberg, Chairman  
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10, Concord, NH 03301-2429

**Date:** February 3, 2016

**RE:** The Joint Application of Northern Pass Transmission, LLC and Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a/ Eversource Energy for a Certificate of Site and Facility (SEC Docket No. 2015-6) by Rebecca Weeks Sherrill More, PhD, Weeks Lancaster Trust, Lancaster New Hampshire

I hereby also request that the following individual be added to the interested party distribution list on behalf of the Weeks Lancaster Trust:

Timothy T. More, Esq., Weeks Lancaster Trust, 50 South Main St., Providence, RI 02903;  
[mailto:timmore@tmorelaw.com](mailto:mailto:timmore@tmorelaw.com), (401) 277-9818

Dear Ms. Monroe,

On behalf of the Weeks Lancaster Trust (WLT) in Lancaster NH, I respectfully petition to intervene in the Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) proceedings under Docket No. 2015-06 relating to the proposed Northern Pass Transmission project, as per their most recent application. Pursuant to NH CAR Site 202.11 and RSA 541-A: 32, I am sending this request to you, both electronically and in hard copy form. The electronic filing copies the SEC's distribution list for this proceeding, as noted in the "cc" line.

The Weeks Lancaster Trust, which owns the Cat Bow Farm in Lancaster NH, was established by the Hon. Sinclair Weeks and his wife Beatrice Dowse Weeks in 1928. The over 700 acres of the Weeks Lancaster Trust property are located on Weeks Road on the southern slopes of Mts. Pleasant and Orne.

The above-ground Towers of the proposed Northern Pass Transmission project (Northern Pass) pass approximately 2 miles from the Weeks Lancaster Trust. From Mt. Prospect, eighty-six (86) of the proposed Towers will be visible from Cape Horn in Northumberland, across the Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge at Pondicherry and south to Whitefield and Dalton. Therefore, the Weeks Lancaster Trust properties lie well within the 10-mile "visual impact zone" used by US Department of Energy (DOE) to assess similar visual impacts from Northern Pass. They also lie within the SEC's rule for a 10 mile "area of visual impact" for rural transmission lines built on existing rights of way where tower heights are increased, as is the case for this segment of the proposed Northern Pass line. (Please see the attached photograph #2) The Weeks Lancaster Trust believes that the proposed Northern Pass will have a significant Adverse Effect on its lands, as well as the township of Lancaster. (Please see the attached photographs #1, 3 and 4)

Cat Bow Farm is approximately 1.25 mi. from the entrance to Weeks State Park on Mt. Prospect, the home of Sinclair Weeks's father, Congressman, Senator and Secretary of War John Wingate Weeks. His sponsorship of the Weeks Act (1911) led directly to creation of the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF), soon to enjoy its Centennial in 2018. Both the Northern and Southern sections of the WMNF attract over 8 million visitors from around the world to New Hampshire each year.

The Weeks Lancaster Trust lands have commanding views of the entire Presidential Range of the White Mountains from Mt. Waumbek in the Northern Section of the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) to Mt. Moosilauke in the southern section.

Cat Bow Farm is comprised of open fields which support native plants, birds and animals, as well as extensive forest land, wetlands and the approx. 50% of the shore of the 128 acre Martin Meadow Pond. In addition, there is the National Register-eligible Sinclair Weeks House (1929), a c. 1830 family homestead, two barns, sheds, and six other homes occupied by family members. Its fields and forest are in current use and, with the Pond, are used extensively for year-round recreation by some 80 family members.

Sinclair Weeks served as Senator from Massachusetts and as Secretary of Commerce in the Eisenhower administration. President Eisenhower visited Sinclair Weeks and his family at Cat Bow Farm in 1955. For this reason, the mansion house is eligible for nomination to the *National Register of Historic Places*.

In the 1960s construction of Interstate-93 threatened the Notch's fragile environment. It was saved by a broad consortium of NH residents, including Sinclair Weeks, ironically responsible for funding Eisenhower's Interstate Highway System as Secretary of Commerce.

In 2000, the six children of Sinclair Weeks gave a conservation easement of 400 acres surrounding Martin Meadow Pond to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. As a result, the people of this region will

enjoy Martin Meadow Pond, its views, wetlands, and habitats for loon, osprey and the American Bald Eagle for recreation in perpetuity.

Furthermore, this petition is based not only on the concerns of the present ownership of the Weeks Lancaster Trust lands, but on a deep concern for 1) the future enjoyment of our family - already extending to a fourth generation - and, not least, 2) to our concern for the welfare of the people of New Hampshire. Our family has served the people of New Hampshire, whether in the State legislature, the US Congress or in the administrations of Presidents Harding, Coolidge and Eisenhower, for over 200 years.

### **Adverse Impacts of the proposed Northern Pass project**

The particular rights, duties, privileges, immunities or other substantial interests relating to these properties that may be affected by the SEC's Northern Pass proceedings include the following:

1. **Close Proximity:** The proposed Northern Pass Transmission line ("Northern Pass") passes approximately 2 miles from the Weeks Lancaster Trust property.

2. **Adverse Visual Impact:** Due to its location, the proposed above-ground 70'+ Northern Pass Towers will directly affect the view from Prospect Farm-Lancaster LLC of the Presidential Range, the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge in the Pondicherry Basin, and Northern and Southern sections of the WMNF.

The DOE's Key Observation Point (KOP #LA-2a) for the assessment of environmental impact (U.S. Department of Energy *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Northern Pass Transmission Line Project* (July 2015): S.5.4a, p. S-10, map 8 and chapter 3 "Affected Environment") notes that, under the NP proposal, Weeks State Park, and therefore the adjacent Weeks Lancaster Trust would be subject to at least thirty-four (34) visible Towers, over twice (2x) the existing fifteen (15) wooden structures, currently less visible at 45' in height (see <http://www.northernpass.us/towns.htm>: maps # 52 - 62).

The view from Mt. Washington State Park itself (see attached photo #1, Mts. Orne, Pleasant and Prospect are on the Right and the open fields and woodlands of Cat Bow Farm are clearly visible) shows that the entire Pondicherry basin - from Mt. Prospect to Whitefield - would be adversely impacted. It would be a tragic irony to have giant metal Towers march through the proximate view-shed of this iconic view of outdoor wilderness and national forests. NH's millions of visitors do not visit the region to see power line Towers, such as those which scar the Quebec landscape in every direction.

3. **Adverse Impact on Recreation:** The Weeks Lancaster Trust lands, due to conservation easements and personal commitment to the conservation of the NH environment, are largely natural and unimpaired. They have high recreational value both to the public and to our family. The family of four generations hikes and skis high up on both Mts. Pleasant and Orne where Northern Pass, approximately two miles away, would adversely impact the setting, use and enjoyment of our land, now and for the long-term future.

4. **Damage to overall property:** Northern Pass's proposed transmission lines would adversely affect the marketability, value, use and enjoyment of the Weeks Lancaster Trust lands as a whole. Its over 700 acres have significant value for town revenues at the present time.

5. **Township & County-wide stigma from the proposed Northern Pass:** Northern Pass's preferred route crosses a substantial part of Lancaster with damaging above-ground lines instead of the buried lines proposed for other townships south of Whitefield and Dalton. Northern Pass thereby creates a stigma for Lancaster as part of the group of New Hampshire's "unimportant townships" - those Coös County townships north of Franconia Notch with insufficient political and economic weight to protect themselves (through successfully insisting on line burial) from Northern Pass's degradation. This township/county-wide stigma impairs the marketability and tourist value of the entire region. Coös County depends upon the unique beauty of its natural beauty, including our sites, to attract visitors to support its challenged economy. As consistent with RSA chapter 162-H, we believe that Northern Pass will substantively erode that fragile economy and jeopardize the tourist and recreation industries that are its best hope for future economic growth. Furthermore, by affecting the economic well-being of the region, they would potentially reduce the crucial social services (hospital, schools) and access to goods and services enjoyed by our family.

### **Petition for Intervener Status**

New Hampshire law recognizes that each site is unique and distinct. We respectfully submit that granting Intervener status to us, whose properties and whose contributions to the State in the form of Weeks State Park and conservation easements are in the public interest. These sites would be directly and adversely impaired by proposed Northern Pass.

In support of this part of our request, we submit the following:

1. The Weeks Lancaster Trust includes significant features that fulfill the SEC's statutory and precedential benchmarks, including natural features (historic field and farm land, wetlands, pond, varied forest types, varied wildlife habitat, bogs, forests), historic features (one (1) historic pre-Civil war farmstead with barn; the Sinclair Weeks National Register-eligible mansion house) and aesthetics (combination of fields, forests, and mountains with both local and extraordinary long-range views), as well as a location and scale that are significant for local and

regional land use considerations.

2. The adverse effects on these sites are directly relevant to areas for which the SEC will make findings, including orderly development of the region, aesthetics, historic sites, natural environment, property values, economic effect, and, therefore, are in the public interest. We therefore wish to have the opportunity to provide specific testimony without limitation. Out of concern for these issues, the Weeks Lancaster Trust filed in 2013 to intervene in the matter of the Northern Pass Transmission LLC application for a Presidential Permit with the US Department of Energy. In July 2014, the Weeks Lancaster Trust further filed a Statement on the Historical and Cultural Impact of the NPT on the township of Lancaster under NHPA (1966) Section 106 as a Consulting Party. We believe that *full burial* of the Northern Pass project from Pittsburg to Deerfield, (DOE, Draft EIS, Alternative Route 4A) is in the best interests of the Weeks Lancaster Trust, the residents of Lancaster NH, the people of New Hampshire and its visitors from around the world.

3. Our collective personal and professional backgrounds and experience include deep knowledge of the historic uniqueness of the Weeks Lancaster Trust property and Lancaster, expertise in historical research and education, legal expertise with regard to real estate issues, and extensive experience in historic property restoration and management. We wish to have the opportunity to use this knowledge and experience personally and directly in defense of the future of Weeks Lancaster Trust lands.

4. The Weeks Lancaster Trust is unique, historic and the Adverse Effect by the proposed Northern Pass is substantive for our family. We believe that the Trust's contribution to the Committee's findings will benefit the public interest.

Thank you for your consideration of this petition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Rebecca S. More". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Weeks Sherrill More, PhD  
Weeks Lancaster Trust

cc: SEC distribution list (as of the date of this email) for Docket No. 2015-06. Copies sent by email.  
Copies of this letter and enclosure have of this date been forwarded via email to all parties on the SEC email distribution list for Docket # 2015-06.



**Photographs re. Weeks Lancaster Trust, Lancaster NH - *without* Northern Pass Towers**

**1. View from Mt. Washington of the Conte-Pondicherry Refuge and (R) Mts. Orne, Pleasant and Prospect, Lancaster**



**2. A portion of the view of the Presidential Range from Weeks Lancaster Trust**





**3. Weeks State Park - The Lodge (1913) & View: Lancaster to Cape Horn & WMNF (N)**



**4. Weeks State Park (KOP LA-2a): View of WMNF - without NP Towers**

